

## NEWS RELEASE

### Landmark Cancer Study Opens Assessment Centre in Cape Breton

SYDNEY, N.S., NOVEMBER 19, 2009 – The Atlantic Partnership for Tomorrow’s Health (Path) has opened an assessment centre in Cape Breton – a new front in the fight against cancer. This is only the second assessment centre to be launched in Atlantic Canada.

The Atlantic Path is part of the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project, a \$42-million national study funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The study will follow the health of 300,000 Canadians for up to 30 years to determine what roles lifestyle, genetics and the environment play in the development of the disease. The ultimate goal: a reduced risk of cancer for future generations.

The Cape Breton Assessment Centre, located at 335 George Street in Sydney, will collect lifestyle information, biological samples and physical measurements from men and women aged 35 to 69 who volunteer to take part in the landmark study. Anyone interested in taking part, or wanting more information about the study, is encouraged to visit the Atlantic Path website at [www.atlanticpath.ca](http://www.atlanticpath.ca) or call 1-877-285-7284.

The Sydney centre is only the second of several assessment centres planned for the four Atlantic provinces. Cancer research is of particular importance in Atlantic Canada, a region with the highest rates of cancer in the country. Each year, more than 13,400 Atlantic Canadians are diagnosed with the disease and 6,300 die of it. Cape Breton County, in particular, is noted for high cancer rates – substantially higher than those in other parts of Canada, and higher than cancer rates in the rest of Nova Scotia.

“The information obtained from the nationwide study will provide an enormous bank of data,” says Dr. Louise Parker, principal investigator for the Atlantic Path. “Researchers will draw on the data to help identify the causes of cancer and, in turn, develop better detection, treatment and prevention methods. It may even help us find ways of preventing some cancers altogether.”

In Atlantic Canada, she adds: “The Atlantic Path research will help us understand why the rates are so high in this region, so that we can find ways to deal with the causes and reduce those rates. The children and grandchildren of our study participants will benefit from this knowledge.”

Dr. Ron MacCormick, Medical Director of the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, adds that Cape Breton welcomes the opening of the assessment centre, and the opportunity to be involved in a study of such breadth and depth. “The Atlantic Path has the potential to significantly expand our knowledge about cancer,” he says, “from how we treat it to, better yet, how we prevent it.”

Participants in the Atlantic Path study will visit their nearest assessment centre to answer questions about their health, diet and lifestyle; provide blood, urine, saliva and toenail samples; and have physical measurements taken, including height, weight and body fat composition.

Participants will also allow researchers to follow their health through cancer registries, hospitalization records and other health-related databases.

Each participant will receive a report summarizing the various measurements taken such as bone density and body mass index. These are compared to standard ranges for age and body type to provide context for the information. Although the assessment is not intended as a medical check, participants can share the report with their doctor if they have any questions.

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